Centres at Allahabad, Farrukhabad, Jhansi, Pilibhit, Agra, Meerut, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Balia and Mau.

**Inclusion of Nonia caste in the list of scheduled castes**

†598. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several representations from the Akhil Bhartiya Nonia Jaati Mahasangh have been received to include to Nonia caste in the list of Scheduled Castes;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the decision to include the Kharia and Agaria castes in the list which are homogeneous to the Nonia caste, has been taken by Government; and

(c) the reasons for the non-inclusion of the Nonia caste in the said list?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c)The Government of Bihar had recommended a proposal for inclusion of Nonia community in the list of Scheduled Castes from Bihar. The proposal of the State Government lacked the requisite ethnographic details. Hence, the State Government of Bihar has been requested to furnish requisite details for further examination of the proposal as per approved modalities. There is no proposal pending with Government for inclusion of Nonia caste in any other States/Union Territories.

**Scheme for the upliftment of down-trodden women**

†599. SHRI D.RYADAV: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for the upliftment of down-trodden women;

(b) whether Government have taken effective steps to abolish the practice of scavenging;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.